

**In the Specification**

On page 8 of the specification, please replace the first full paragraph at line 10 and ending at line 24 with the following amended paragraph:

The polyester polymer particles have a surface and a center, and the It.V. at the surface of the particle is less than 0.25 dL/g higher than the It.V. at the center of the particle, preferably less than 0.20 dL/g higher than the It.V. at the center of the particle, preferably 0.15 dL/g or less, or 0.10 dL/g or less, or even 0.050 dL/g or less.. In this embodiment, the It.V. of the polyester polymer at the surface of the particle can be much lower than the It.V. at the center of the particle. In another embodiment, however, there is provided a polyester particle which has a small surface to center It.V. gradient in that the absolute value of the difference in the It.V. between the center of the pellet and the surface of the pellet is less than 0.25 dL/g such that the surface It.V. can neither drop below nor exceed 0.20 dL/g relative to the center of the particle, preferably 0.15 dL/g or less, or 0.10 dL/g or less, or even ~~0.50 dL/g~~ 0.05 dL/g or less. In another embodiment, in a bulk of pellets having a volume of 1 cubic meter or more, the It.V. average of the differences between the It.V. of the surface of the particles and the It.V. of the center of the particles in the bulk is not greater than 0.25 dL/g, or 0.20 dL/g, or 0.15 dL/g, or 0.10 dL/g or 0.05 dL/g.